THE REMONSTRANCE.

BOSTON, OCTOBER, 1907.

The Remonstrance is published by the Massachusetts Association Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women. It expresses the views of Women in Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, New York, Illinois, Iowa, Oregon, Washington, and other states who believe that the great majority of their sex do not want the ballot, and that to force it upon them would not only be an injustice to women, but would lessen their influence for good and imperil the community. The Remonstrants ask a thoughtful consideration of their views in the interest of fair discussion.

Massachusetts Association Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women.

Thirty-eight Branch Committees; 12,553 members in 253 cities, towns, and villages.

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SOME CORRECTIONS CORRECTED.

THE *Woman's Journal* for June 29 and Miss Blackwell in numerous letters to the newspapers have described as "direct misstatements of fact," "a string of blunders," etc., three assertions in the June REMONSTRANCE.

The first was the statement that the constitutional convention of Oklahoma "refused consideration to the proposition to give to the women of Oklahoma the right of suffrage which had been theirs when Oklahoma was a territory." Upon this point the REMONSTRANCE was in error. The Oklahoma convention at first voted down the proposition to incorporate school suffrage for women in the constitution, 32 to 29; and this action was reported in the papers of the territory as "dashing the last hopes of the advocates of woman's suffrage." Later this action was reconsidered. When the secretary's report, printed in the June REMONSTRANCE, was prepared, she had before her the report of the first vote, but not the second. The significant thing about the action of the Oklahoma convention, however, was not its votes on school suffrage, but the fact that, radical as its action was in other particulars, it rejected the proposal to omit the word "male" from the qualifications for voters by a vote of 54 to 37, in spite of the persistent campaign which the suffragists began before the convention met and continued until the final vote.

The second statement criticised was that "in California the result was especially disappointing" to the suffragists. Here no question of fact was involved. The *Woman's Journal* does not deny that the suffrage amendment was defeated in the California legislature, but adduces the fact that the vote by which it was defeated was close, as if that were a refutation of the statement in THE REMONSTRANCE. This raises the nice question whether disappointment is or is not more keen when victory was expected and confidently predicted, as was the case in California, and then is lost by a narrow margin. The statement in THE REMONSTRANCE was based on the former assumption, and is abundantly sustained by the vehement expressions of disappointment which emanated from the California suffragists after their defeat.

The third statement assailed referred to the suffrage question in the British Parliament. THE REMONSTRANCE said, "A petition signed by twenty-one thousand women was presented, protesting." Commenting upon this, the *Woman's Journal* said, "The petition was thrown out by Parliament as invalid, the signatures having proved to be largely bogus." For its original statement THE REMONSTRANCE had no less authority than the parliamentary report of the *London Times*. As for the accusation of the *Woman's Journal*, it is pronounced "quite untrue" by Mr. Rowland Whitehead, Liberal member of the House of Commons, in a letter printed elsewhere in this paper, under the heading "Not 'Bogus Petitions.'" THE REMONSTRANCE invites attention to this correspondence as a fresh illustration of the recklessness with which leaders in the woman suffrage movement assail the women who differ from them.

37,700 REMONSTRANTS.

THE protest of English women last March against the enactment of the woman suffrage bill by Parliament was in the following words:

"We, the undersigned, fully realizing the importance and value of women's work in our national life, especially in education and the care of the poor, protest against Parliamentary suffrage being granted to women, believing it would destroy, rather than add to, their real influence in their own sphere of work in the world."

The protest was signed only by women over the age of eighteen. It has usually been referred to, in this country, as having been signed by 21,000 women. But THE REMONSTRANCE learns, from the secretary of the English committee, that the first list of signatures, presented to the House of Commons, March 8, by Mr. S. T. Evans, included 21,200 signatures; and that a second list of 16,500 signatures was presented to the House by Mr. Massie, March 22.

These protests were in circulation only four weeks. That, in that short time, without previous organization, the English remonstrants should have secured 37,700 signatures to their protest indicates the strength of the anti-suffrage sentiment among English women.

NEW YORK REMONSTRANTS.

At a hearing before the Judiciary Committee of the legislature at Albany, February 6, a large number of women from New York, Brooklyn, Buffalo, Albany, and other parts of the state, appeared to protest against a resolution for a woman suffrage amendment. Mrs. Emil Knichling read a paper expressing their views, which was in part as follows:

"Would it not be a rather impulsive act for the New York legislature, moved by the appeals of a minority, to favor the grave social experiment of giving the suffrage to more than two million women whom the suffragists, after sixty years of missionary work, cannot convert into wanting it? Women have been accused of being impulsive, but they are far-seeing enough to be conservative on this question. Shall the New York legislature be less conservative than the New York woman?

"This is surely not a man's question; it is a woman's question. Do not act on impulse; let the women of this state decide that they want a vote before you use your official position to help make woman suffrage a law. What ten thousand women want is not the final necessity in a state of over seven million persons.

"We believe that woman's non-partisan attitude gives her the opportunity for influence in the community which the suffrage would divert and curtail.

"We believe that intelligence and integrity of character are more potent factors in governing woman's wages than the ballot would be.

"We believe that more enduring good can be accomplished by training and molding a child's nature than by voting on the tariff, civil service reform, railroad monopoly or any other national or state issue.

"We believe it to be a great wrong to impose upon woman political duties which the majority do not want, and the faithful discharge of which would prove a needless and useless burden.

"We believe that you can be trusted to defeat this resolution, and we earnestly beg you to protect our interests by your constitutional powers of check to the end that woman may continue active and beneficent in ways with which political duties would conflict."

(In the New York Assembly, March 27, a bill to give women the right to vote in cities of the third class was defeated, 70 to 38. A resolution proposing to submit a constitutional amendment was introduced, but the Senate Committee on the Judiciary voted not to report it.)

THE MAINE REMONSTRANCE.

The following paragraphs are taken from the "Remonstrance Against the Granting of Suffrage to Women," which was written by Elinor S. Moody, of Portland, and endorsed by the Maine Committee Opposed to the Extension of Suffrage to Women, for presentation to the Maine legislature at the 1907 session:

Suffrage Not Wanted.

"The suffragists know, as do we all, that when the majority of women want a thing done, that thing is done for them immediately. Then why have they been for so many years besieging legislatures, presenting petitions, working, arguing and, recently in London, fighting for their 'rights,' as they call them? Simply because the majority of women are not behind the movement and the legislators all know it."

Women to Oppose Men.

"If women were given an opportunity to work in opposition to men, which would appear to be the case if the female vote is to bring about anything of a change, the evil effects of such a conflict would strike at the very foundation of our social order, since there are not many homes which would be improved by the introduction of an antagonistic political element."

Difference in Duties.

"We believe that both men and women are entitled to the best the schools and colleges afford, but it does not follow that each is to bear the same burdens or enter the same field of labor. Here, as well as anywhere, we may quote from the message to Congress of our honored President Roosevelt, in which he said: 'The prime duty of man is to be the bread-winner; the prime duty of woman is to be the mother and housewife. All questions of tariff and finance sink into utter insignificance when compared with the vital importance of trying to shape conditions, so that the duties of the man and woman can be fulfilled under reasonably favorable circumstances.'

"The woman who is busy making a government must leave undone that work for which she was created, and for which the government alone exists, namely, the protection and preservation of the home and family, for her best energy will be steadily flowing away from this important channel. She may either give her time, thought, and strength to the making of laws which form our government, or to the building up of mankind, upon whom must rest, in years to come, the public burdens of the state and nation, both industrial and social. But when she attempts to do both at one and the same time, her work will be worth very little, since the accomplishments of a tired, nervous, and overworked woman are never those to which we point with pride and satisfaction."

(In the Maine legislature, a resolution for a constitutional amendment was adversely reported by the Judiciary Committee, and both House and Senate voted unanimously that the resolution "ought not to pass.")

THE SITUATION IN OREGON.

The anti-suffragists of Oregon hear that the question of full woman suffrage is to be submitted to the voters of the state for the fourth time in June, 1908. The first defeat was in 1888. Again in 1900 it was voted down by the people. Then the initiative and referendum became a law in Oregon. By its means any question can be submitted to the voters on presentation to the Secretary of State of a petition signed by ten per cent of the voting body. The suffragists of the state prepared and presented such a petition and the campaign was opened in December, 1905.

The cause was taken up by the National Suffrage Association, active and experienced campaigners were sent to the state in numbers, and large sums were devoted to the work from the national treasury. The Oregon State Association Opposed to the Extension of the Suffrage to Women bestirred itself, worked hard through methods which were dignified and proved effective, and in June, 1906, the vote was taken. It stood 36,902 for suffrage and 47,075 opposed, and 84 per cent of the voters voted on the question.

After so large and decisive a vote against woman suffrage, the state might be supposed to have expressed its opinion with sufficient force so that it might stand for a few years as the will of the people. But once again the suffragists were active.

On the 8th of February, this year, a resolution providing for an amendment to the state constitution was presented to the legislature through the efforts of Mrs. Duniway,

the state president. The object of this was to save the trouble and expense required by the preparation of another initiative petition and to secure the endorsement of the legislators. This resolution passed the House by one vote. That was Friday, and on Saturday the following letter was sent to all members of the legislature by the Anti-Suffrage Committee:

FEBRUARY 8, 1907.

Dear Sir, — A resolution is to be presented to your body asking for your votes for a constitutional amendment granting suffrage to women.

Twice in the last six years the people of Oregon have voted down a woman suffrage amendment.

In 1900 the majority against it was 1,966.

In 1906 the majority against it was 10,173.

In 1900 eleven counties were against it.

In 1906 twenty-three counties were against it.

The people of Oregon have thus forcibly expressed their opinion on the subject. The majority of *women do not want the ballot.*

We ask you to represent the wishes of both by voting against this measure.

For the Committee,

....., *President.*

As will be seen, this made no argument on the merits of the question, but simply stated the facts as to the decisive vote less than a year before. On Monday afternoon the resolution was defeated in the Senate by a vote of 19 to 8.

The suffragists are preparing to present another petition to the Secretary of State this fall, and if that is done, the question will be voted on again in June, 1908.

The Anti-Suffrage Association is well organized, has had active experience in two campaigns, and will do everything in its power to prevent the thrusting of this burden upon that large number of women who neither desire it nor believe it a necessary or fitting duty for their sex.

MRS. R. W. WILBUR.

THE CHICAGO CHARTER CONVENTION.

PROBABLY few suffrage campaigns in this country have been more energetically waged than that before the Charter Convention in Chicago for municipal suffrage for women in that city. Yet the measure did not succeed in getting beyond the committee stage. It succumbed to what seems to be the "Illinois habit" in such cases.

Mrs. Caroline F. Corbin, president of the Illinois Association Opposed to the Extension of Suffrage to Women, says of the causes which led to the signal victory of the Association:

"When the anti-suffragists were told that a petition seventy-five yards long, signed by ten thousand men and women, asking for the enfranchisement of women, would be submitted to the Committee on Municipal Elections of the Chicago Charter Convention, that the cause would have the endorsement of the Illinois Federation of Woman's Clubs and of the W. C. T. U., that the Chicago Woman's Club, numbering a thousand members, and several other local organizations, would support it, it seemed a formidable array. It needed, however, only a cool analysis of the situation to reassure the opponents.

"The ease with which signatures may be obtained to any sort of petition and the very common practice of forging them by wholesale are so notorious that the value of such testimonials has been greatly lowered in public estimation. A case in point is that of the recent referendum in Chicago, where a petition, circulated in the very last days of the municipal campaign, showed over fifty-two thousand more names than were polled as voters in favor of the measure referred: the logical conclusion being that at least that number of names were forged. To those familiar with club politics, the endorsement of the woman's clubs has been similarly depreciated. The gentlemen of the committee evidently gave due weight to the fact that, after all, club women form but a small percentage of the great mass of women, while it is well known that a still smaller percentage of the members of the clubs rule the politics of the whole body. The assertion was made that twenty thousand women in Chicago were clamoring for the ballot, but when the homes and social circles of the city were closely scanned to see where outside of club committee rooms these women were to be found, they failed to materialize to any appreciable extent. The conclusion was therefore naturally reached that there was a mistake in the figures, and the committee lost faith in the mathematics of the petitioners.

"As to the W. C. T. U., its claim that the political woman would prove the deadly foe of the saloon, reiterated so persistently for more than a generation, has been too often refuted by facts, as in Kansas and Colorado, to be any longer considered seriously. The testimony of mayors of cities and governors of states where women vote that the practice has proved beneficial, was taken *cum grano salis*, because it is notorious that such testimony given at the behest of women politicians is not uninfluenced by a fear of future retribution at the polls at the hands of these same women.

"For the refutation of the assertion that participation in politics did not and could never unsex women, deprive them of charm and render them less womanly, the gentlemen had only to look upon the scores of women who crowded the committee room to push their cause by all the means known to the most experienced lobbyists and draw their own conclusions.

"The whole case fell to pieces by its own weight, and the opponents had little to do except to present clearly and concisely such printed facts and arguments as seemed to them to bear fairly upon the question, to have them read by the secretary of the committee and put on file, and then leave the case with the committee."

(Three suffrage measures were introduced in the Illinois legislature at the session of 1907: a bill giving municipal suffrage to the women of Chicago; a general suffrage bill to allow women to vote for Presidential electors, and for city, town and village officials, and on questions submitted to the electors; and a resolution for a constitutional amendment. All were defeated.)

THE RHODE ISLAND PROTEST.

At the legislative hearing at Providence, March 19, upon the bill proposing to confer Presidential suffrage upon women, Mrs. Charles Warren Lippitt, wife of ex-Governor Lippitt, expressed the views of Rhode Island women opposed to the bill in a forcible address in which she dealt especially with the suffragist argument that the casting of a ballot is a matter which takes but a moment. Mrs. Lippitt's remarks were in part as follows:

"One of the speakers used words to this effect: 'To go to the polls once in four years to cast a ballot will not take too much of a woman's time,' etc. This was said by a woman in favor of suffrage and can be most effectively answered by a woman in opposition. For, after all, while we must be most grateful to those men who assist us in advocating our views, this much vexed question primarily concerns women, and should, I submit, be primarily settled by women.

"Now, I would ask that speaker if the depositing of a slip of paper once in four years is all the ballot implies to her. If so, then why do men consider necessary all that machinery described by one speaker on Tuesday last? What is the use of caucuses, primaries, conventions, ward meetings and all the rest of it? Is this part still to be left to men, and women content themselves with a vote for one or another man or measure as shall be indicated on the ballot after due discussion and selection by men? Why, gentlemen, I should consider this 'political slavery' indeed. If men with their previous training consider so much time important toward the casting of an intelligent vote, how are women, with no training, no study of pending issues, no intimate mixing with men in daily life, to do conscientiously their duty by themselves and their city or country, as the case may be? It is claimed that women are as well fitted to vote as many men who now exercise the franchise. To this I heartily agree in the case of many women. But to add to the present unintelligent, uneducated man the equally unintelligent, uneducated woman, I claim would be no advantage to the body politic. I do not believe that the present evils of practically unrestricted manhood suffrage would be remedied by adding unrestricted woman suffrage."

(The Senate passed a Presidential suffrage bill, February 19, by a vote of 19 to 16. But, after the hearing at which the protest above reported was made, the House Committee on Special Legislation, April 10, decided not to report the measure, and the bill was dropped.)

THE DEATH OF MRS. LYMAN ABBOTT.

At the first regular meeting this uatumn of the Executive Committee of this Association it was

Resolved, That the committee has heard with deep regret of the death of Mrs. Lyman Abbott, and they desire now to express their sympathy to her family and their appreciation of her noble life.

The committee feels deeply her loss to the cause in which they are enlisted, and especially to the New York State Association, of which Mrs. Abbott was the dignified and greatly valued president.

They hope that her influence may be extended by the printing of her Albany address, which shows breadth of view, courage, and firm convictions.

Her example should be a far-reaching inspiration.

[From the *New York Evening Post*, Aug. 17, 1907.]

NOT "BOGUS PETITIONS."

To the Editor of *The Evening Post:*

Sir, — In a letter in the *Evening Post* of July 9, Miss Alice Stone Blackwell, essaying to correct certain alleged errors in the Massachusetts Remonstrance, said with reference to the petition against woman suffrage sent by twenty-one thousand Englishwomen to the House of Commons last spring:

"The petition was thrown out by Parliament, the signatures having proved to be largely bogus. Every person well informed on the suffrage question has known this for months."

Thinking it extremely unlikely that the high-minded and intelligent women who circulated the anti-suffrage petition in England would stoop to dishonorable methods, I sent a letter of inquiry to Mr. Rowland Whitehead, one of the leading Liberal members of the House of Commons, and I have received from him the following reply:

Lincoln's Inn, London, July 31, 1907.

Dear Sir, — In reply to your letter with reference to the petition against woman suffrage presented to the House of Commons on March 8 last, and signed by twenty-one thousand women, it is quite untrue to state that the signatures to the petition "proved to be largely bogus." There were a few cases in which two or three different names appeared to be in the same handwriting, and there was one batch of five or six names which seemed to have been written by one person. It is by no means uncommon to find that the names of several members of the same family are appended to a petition in the same handwriting. If it were worth while to investigate these cases, it would probably be found that the person who signed the names had authority to do so.

I enclose you an extract from the *Morning Post* of April 11, 1907, which comments upon the misleading statements above mentioned. That extract refers to a technical rule of the House of Commons by which the "prayer" of a petition must be written upon each sheet of paper on which the signatures occur. This precludes the fixing on to the original petition of sheets which contain nothing but signatures. It is merely a technical rule of the House, which is of very recent introduction, and not known to the general public. Failure in this respect of any part of a petition to comply with this technical rule does not in any way imply that the signatures to the petition are bogus.

Yours faithfully,

Rowland Whitehead.

The extract from the *Morning Post* of April 11, 1907, to which Mr. Whitehead refers, is as follows:

"Misleading Statements. — The impression conveyed by this communication is quite erroneous. The writers describe the petitions presented by Mr. Samuel Evans and Dr. Massie as 'bogus petitions.' They say that 'multitudes' of the so-called signatures are not signatures at all, and they quote Mr. J. M. Robertson, M.P., as saying that 'whole batches of signatures are written in by single hands.' All of these statements are no doubt unintentionally but, as a matter of fact, entirely misleading. A representative of the *Morning Post* had the opportunity last evening of examining several yards — they are in long rolls — of the two petitions referred to. He did so first with the assistance of Mr. Henry J. Wilson, chairman of the House of Commons Committee on Public Petitions, and next with the help of Mr. J. M. Robertson, the member whose statement is quoted in the letter. He found that among the several hundred signatures looked through there were perhaps a dozen cases in which two or three different names, usually but not invariably of members of the same family, appeared to be in the same handwriting, and there was one batch of five or six that seemed to have been written by the same person. Mr. J. M. Robertson authorized the statement that when he spoke of 'whole batches' he did not mean whole sheets, but referred to instances of this kind. Mr. H. J. Wilson stated that it was extremely common in numerously-signed petitions to find cases in which persons have signed for others and without any evil intention.

"While it is perfectly true that the petitions are informal except in respect to the first few signatures, as the 'prayer' does not appear on any but the first sheet, they cannot be fairly described as 'bogus.' Nor did last night's investigation justify the assertion that 'multitudes' of the so-called signatures are not signatures at all. Very little importance is attached to petitions by members of the House of Commons generally, but these two will probably carry quite as much weight as any others bearing a large number of signatures. A small proportion of the signatures would no doubt be disallowed on a rigorous examination by the committee, but the great majority would be passed as genuine."

Miss Blackwell's plain statement is that the peittion "was thrown out by Parliament," and that the reason for this action was that the signatures had "proved to be largely bogus." But from Mr. Whitehead's letter and the article in the London *Morning Post*, it appears that the real trouble with the petition was a failure to comply with a new and little-understood technical formality regarding the heading; and that in only a comparatively few instances were several names written in one handwriting, and then in nearly every case under conditions easily explainable by the fact that the signers were members of the same family.

Surely these are slight grounds on which to base a sweeping accusation of fraud. It seems to me a pity that the woman suffrage leaders in this country should not be able to carry on their propaganda without aspersing the motives and misrepresenting the acts of women whose convictions lead them to oppose the granting of the ballot to their sex.

Frank Foxcroft.

Boston, August 15.